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MAN

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the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

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SUPER-STAR

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Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN™

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MURDER ON THE WIND!

OKAY, BASICALLY THE PROBLEM IS THIS: OUR HERO HAS BEEN HYPONOTIZED INTO IMMOBILITY BY THE ETHERICAL FIGURE WHO CALLS HIMSELF WILL-O'-THE-WISP—AND NOW THEY HAVE BOTH BEEN UNEXPECTEDLY CONFRONTED BY J. JONAH JAMESON'S INCREDIBLE SPIDER-SLAYER!

GOT ALL THAT? GREAT! WE'LL EMBELLISH WHERE NECESSARY AS WE GO GALLOPING ALONG!!

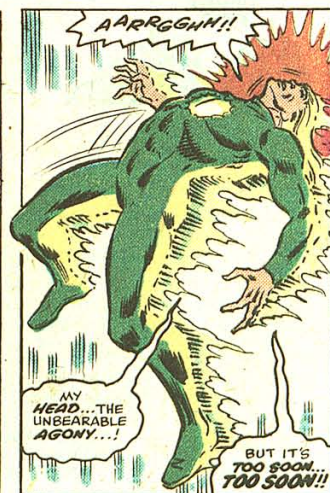
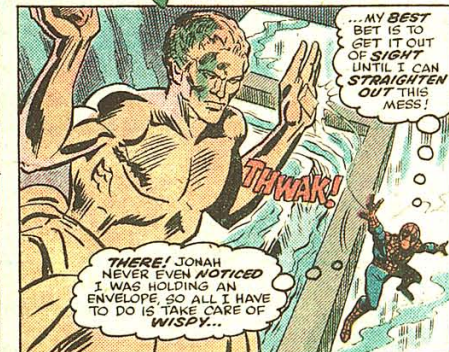
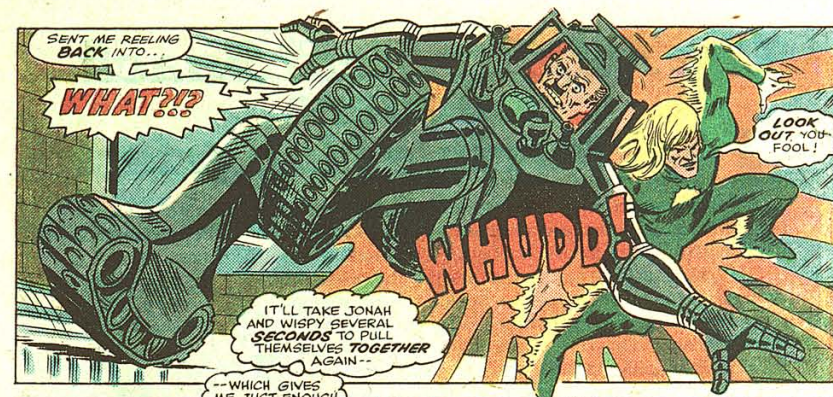
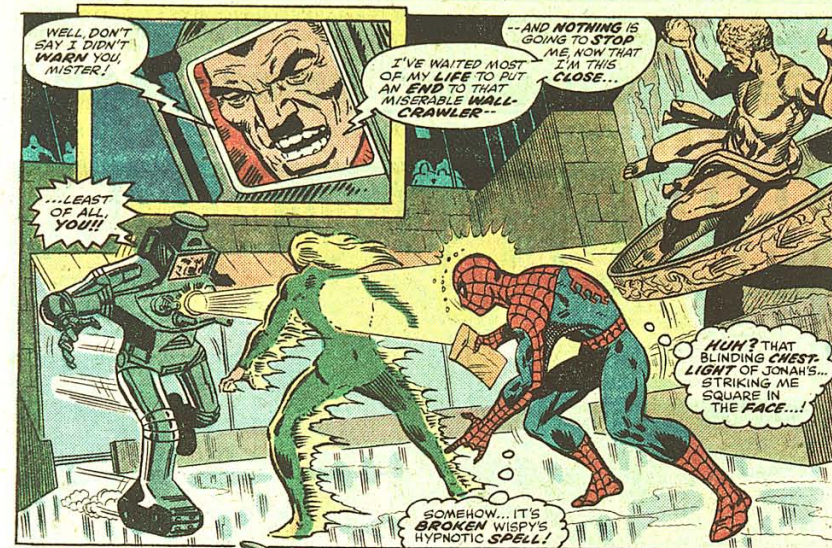


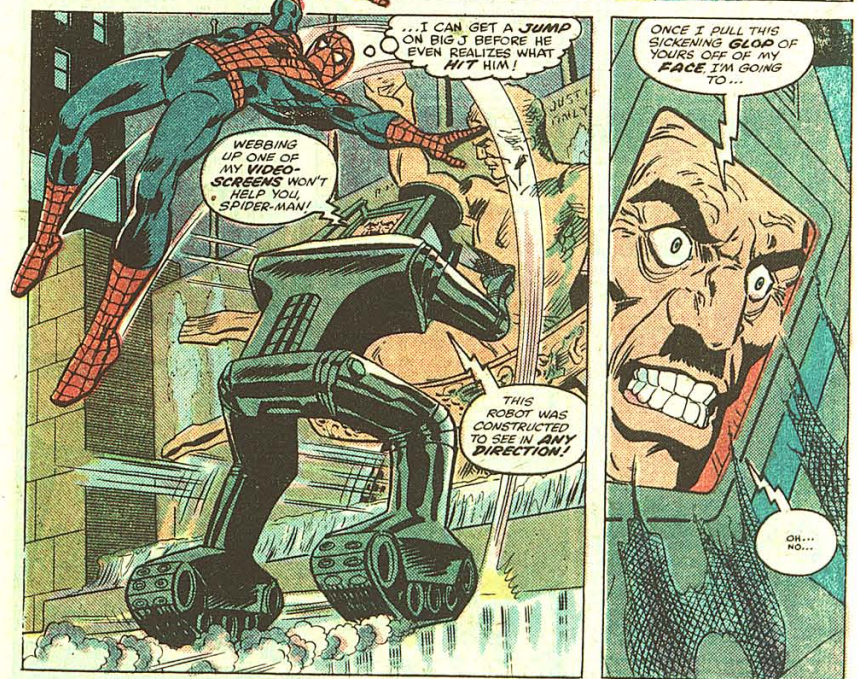
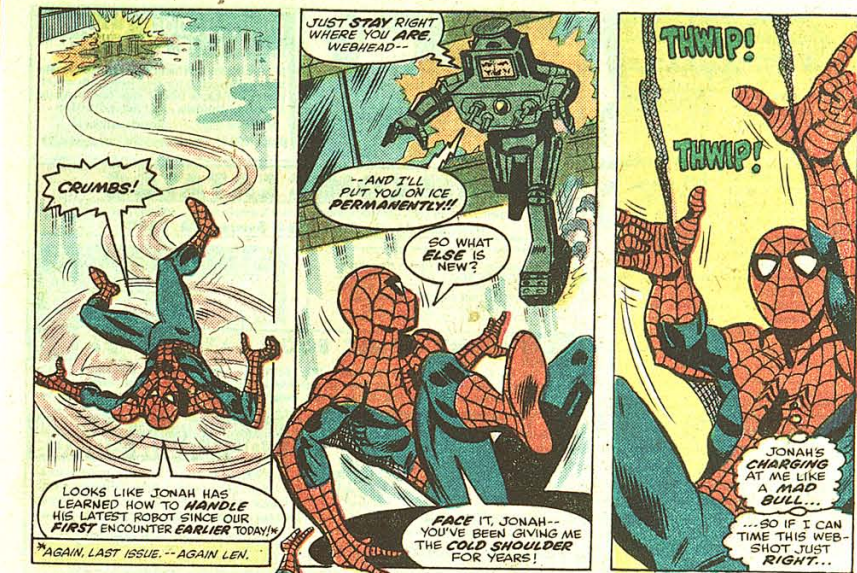
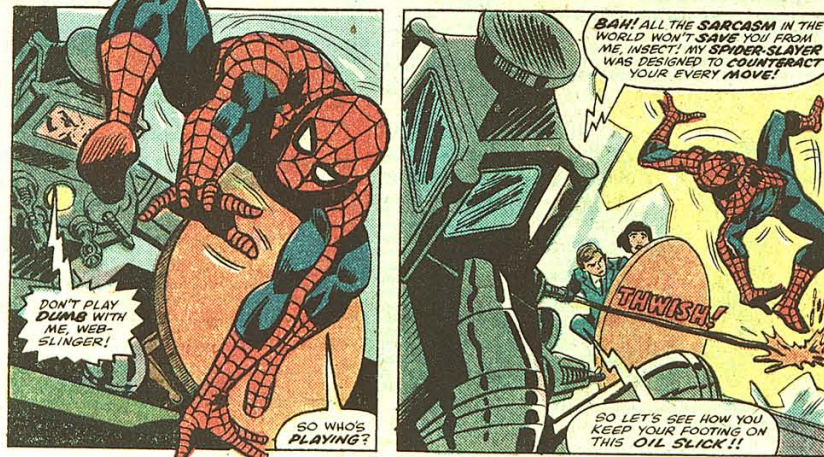
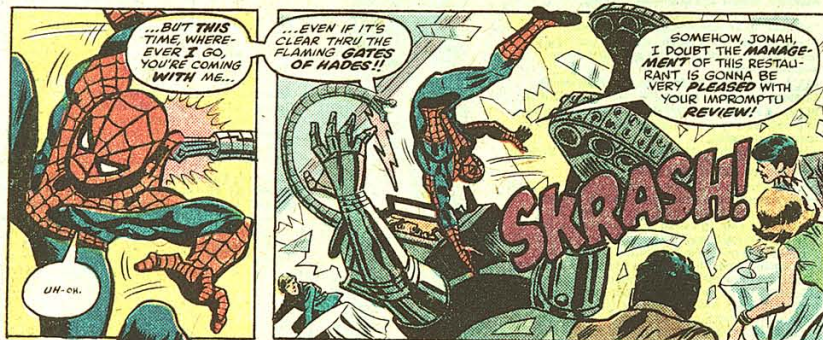
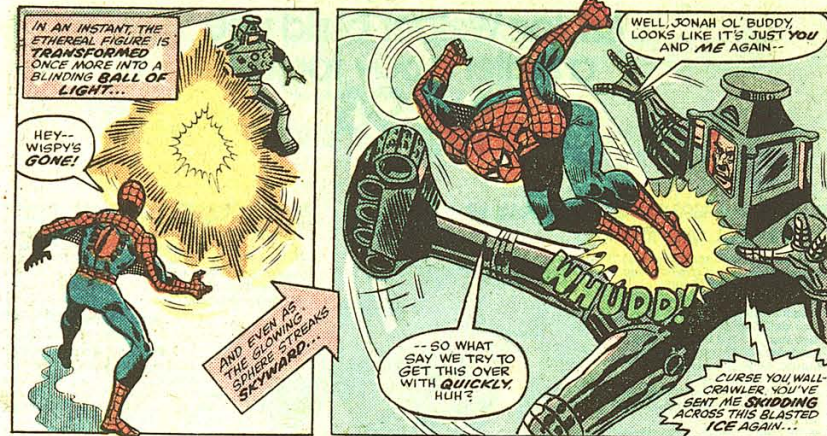
OUT OF THE WAY, WHOEVER—YOU ARE—THE WEB-SLINGER IS MINE!!

I'M AFRAID I CANNOT DO THAT, MY FRIEND! SPIDER-MAN HAS STOLEN SOMETHING THAT BELONGS TO ME--

--AND I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO TOUCH HIM UNTIL I HAVE TAKEN IT BACK!

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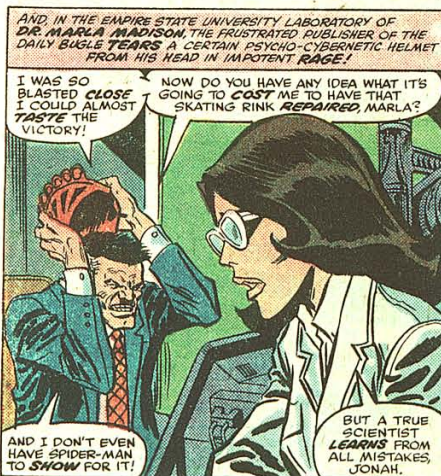
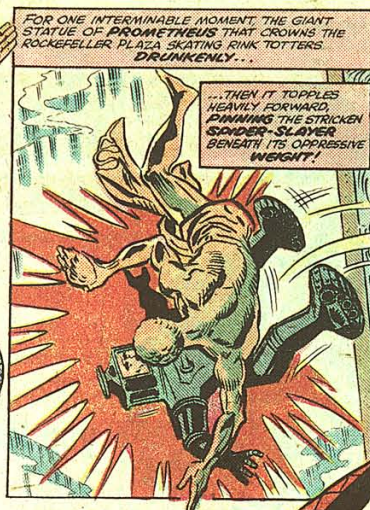
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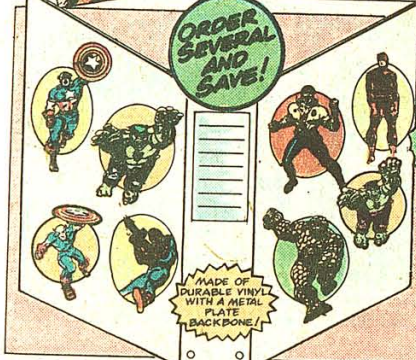


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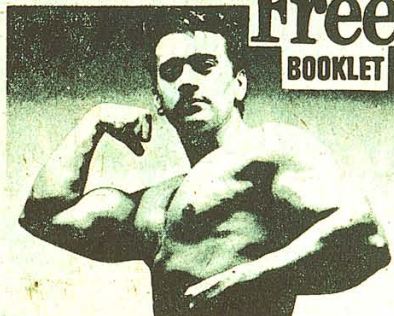
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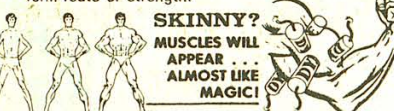
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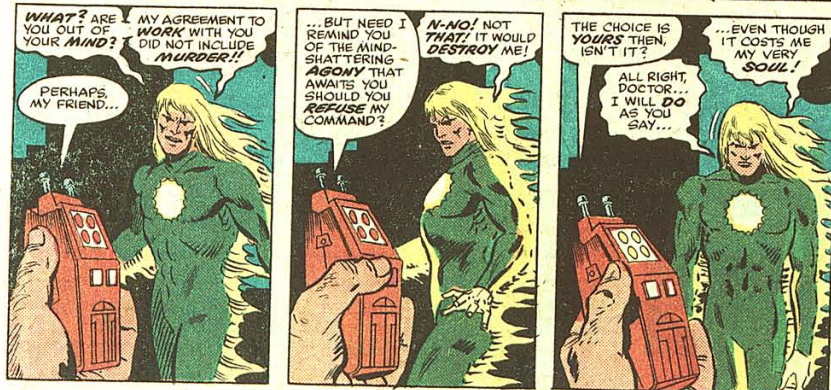
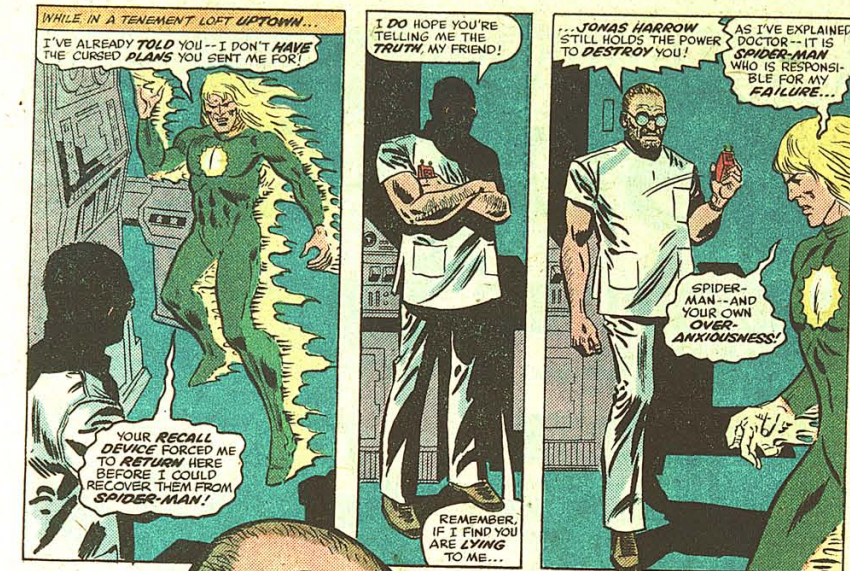
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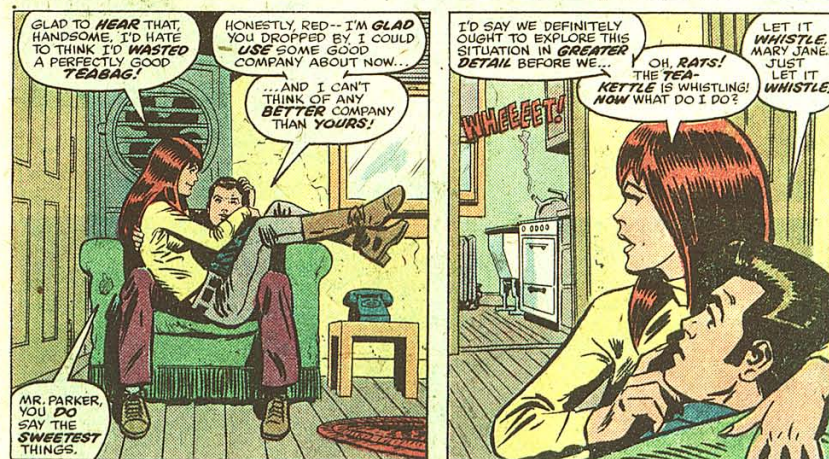
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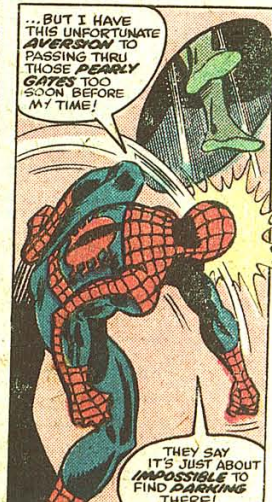
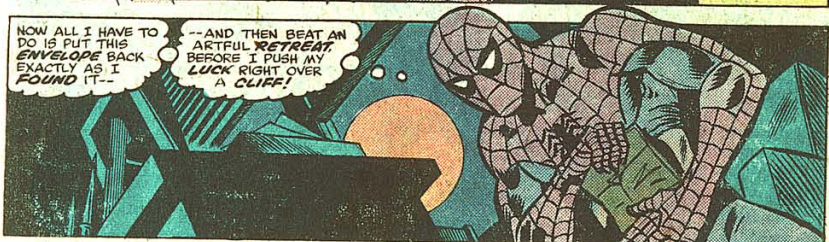
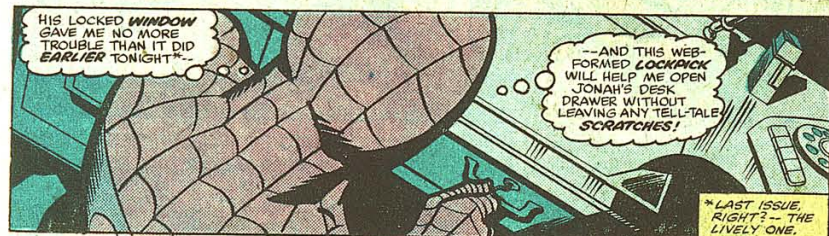
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THE SPIDER'S WEB

Dear Marvel,

The two-part Kingpin story which concluded in SPIDER-MAN #164 was the finest tale to appear in the book this year. It had a little of everything: action, suspense, character development, and a race-against-time finale that contained enough tension to fill two more issues.

Speaking of that finale, Ross Andru's trip to the Brooklyn Navy Yards really paid off. His authentic depicting of this locale enhanced the second half of the story more than any other single factor. If other artists would take the initiative the way Ross did, then *atmosphere*, a vital part of any comics adventure, could not help but benefit.

Scriptwise, Len Wein made a strong showing with "Deadline." The Kingpin was perfectly portrayed as a cruel Godfather type who demands loyalty from his offspring no matter what murderous acts he commits. His wife Vanessa came through as a lady who may possess more of a sense of honor than he does (as evidenced by the fact that she let Spidey go when she could've ordered those gunsels to open up on him), but who has been hardened by years of marriage to this ganglord; hardened to the point where she's nearly as ruthless as he is. Len, *this* is the type of writing I've come to expect from you; the kind whose absence caused me to send in some decidedly negative letters in the past few months. Should the quality of these last two outings be maintained, however, you won't be seeing many more of those.

SPIDER-MAN #164 received quite a build-up earlier this year, with the shadowy figure of the Kingpin appearing more than once, and with Spidey tangling with his hirelings on three separate occasions. It was all worth it, though. Here's hoping the return of Steggon (and, I suspect, the Lizard) will be just as good.

Ed Via
1648 Dean Road
Roanoke, VA 24018

Well, don't keep us in suspense, Ed. Was the return of Steggon and the Lizard as good as you thought our Kingpin saga was? As always, you and the rest of Marveldom Assembled are the *real* editors of our books. If we do something you dislike, let us know. If we do something you *do* like, let us know that, too. Even a lowly armadillo can use a word of praise or two every now and then.

You've no idea how lonely it can get, being chained up in this dungeon, day in and day out.

Dear Len, Ross, and Mike:

In response to SPIDER-MAN #163 and #164, I have to applaud! The Kingpin has been one of my favorite Spidey villains, and I hope you have not killed him off. He just didn't get enough play this time around, but I will admit that you handled the Kingpin and his family extremely well. If I didn't know better, I would think that you created the characters yourselves!

Finally, Peter's apartment has been furnished. Although one might argue that the effort was wasted, considering how much time he spends there! I'm pleased with the current trend in respect to the increased attention paid to Spider-Man's alter ego. What with all the time Peter spends in costume, it's a wonder that all of his friends don't desert him, let alone MJ! Friends require some attention. Yes, I know that shouldn't be the case ideally, but since when has anything operated that way?

The cover on #164 was the best cover this month. Did John Romita draw and ink it, or did Gil Kane do the pencils?

Sam Hays
109B Chapman Hall, Adelphi University
Garden City, NY 11530

The Jazzy One was responsible for that stunning SPIDER-MAN cover all by his little lonesome, Sam, although

he only had time to ink Energetic Ed Hannigan's cover pencils this time around.

What with the sensational new SPIDER-MAN newspaper strip slated to erupt across the country any minute now, it seems the Jazzy Mr. Romita barely has time to breathe, let alone handle covers anymore, but we'll keep him shackled to his drawing board for as long as inhumanly possible. We're nothing if not determined around your bombastic Bullpen.

Dear Len, Ross, etc.—

I'm usually not bothered by silly little discrepancies and faults in continuity and all that, but grammatical errors? As a writer, how can I let them pass? In SPIDER-MAN #164, on page 14, Doctor Curt Connors calls his life-restoring gadget an "Enervator." So many people make that same mistake! Maybe they mix the word up with "innovate" or something, but let me tell you that "enervate" does not mean conducive to life and energy—on the contrary! Webster says it means, "1. To deprive of nerve, force or strength. 2. To lessen the mental or moral vigor of." The OED and American Heritage agree, so there.

Otherwise, SPIDER-MAN #164 was good, very exciting, very swift-moving. The final battle scene was truly suspenseful. Thanks for the good times.

Gerard Jones
1250 San Miguel Street
Gilroy, CA 95020

Gee, Ger, you've really sort of put us in a corner with your little missive. Y'see, when Lively Len Wein first coined the name "Enervator" for Dr. Curt Connors' dazzling device, he thought of the word solely as a contraction of the phrase, ENERGY generator, hence enervator with the "v" thrown in for dramatic effect. Len never considered he might be corrupting an actual word that might lead a reader astray as to his intention.

So, even though the Lively One didn't make an actual error, the no-prize is yours. It's the least we can do to make a Faithful One happy.

Gentlemen:

I am very pleased with the current storyline you people are now doing. The subplot dealing with Jameson, the revealing photos of Peter getting rid of his clone double, and Ms. Madison are especially exciting. For a while now, I have been trying to figure out exactly what conclusion Jameson drew from these pictures. Does he think Spider-Man killed Peter Parker and is now impersonating him? Or is it one of a dozen other possibilities? This one is surely a winner.

On the bad side, the Mary Jane subplot is getting a wee bit monotonous. You can't have her leave Pete, then go back, just to leave again. I have no suggestions, just faith in Mr. Wein to come up with a dazzling, if somewhat unorthodox, solution for this matter. One thing, you're not going to get Pete into another battle with Flash, are you?

Before I close, I have a question for you. Mainly, what ever happened to Dr. Jonas Harrow? We have not heard from him since SPIDER-MAN #126, when he stomped off into the distance, mumbling something about gaining the power. He wouldn't be the mysterious photographer that Jameson is so grateful to.

Don't ever stop getting better.

T.W. Carl
Box 145
Frenchtown, NJ 08825

We'll do our best, T.W., we'll do our gosh-honest best.

As you've seen, if you've read this issue before you turned to this letters page, Dr. Jonas Harrow is back—with a vengeance! The J. Jonah Jameson/Peter Parker photo fiasco comes to a head of sorts next issue, and we have plans for the Parker/Mary Jane Watson relationship that will positively knock you right off your delicate tootsies.

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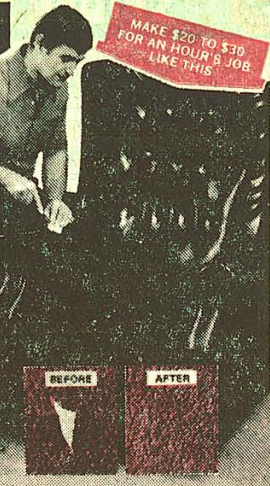
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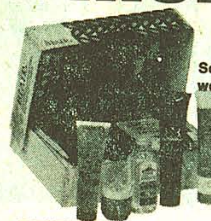
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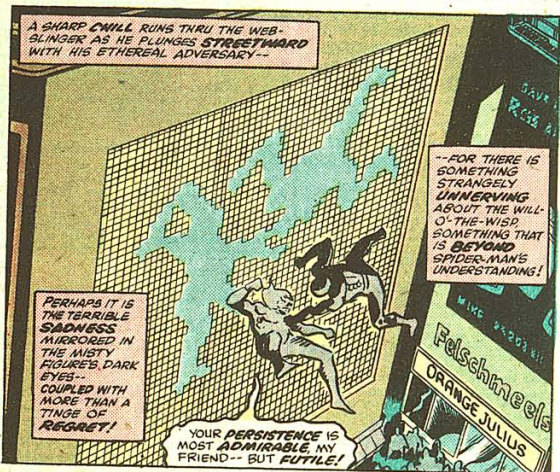
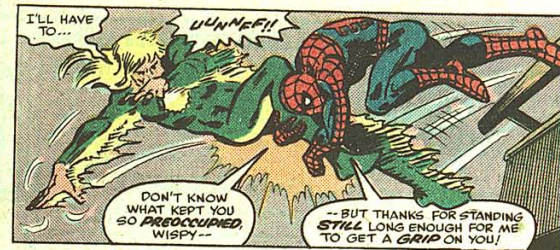
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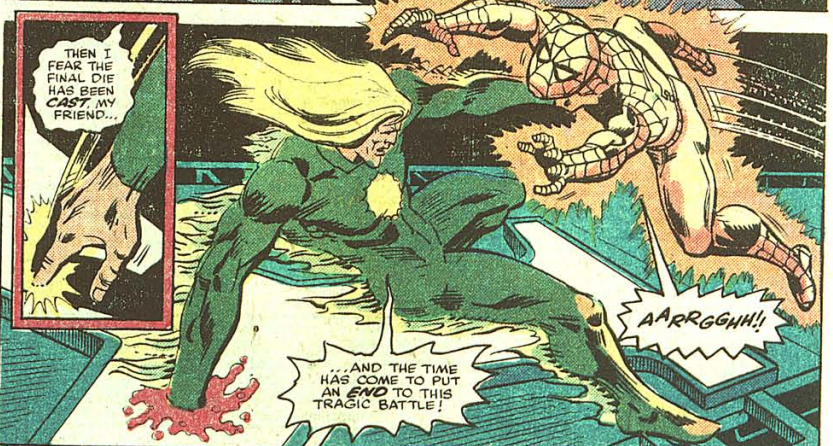
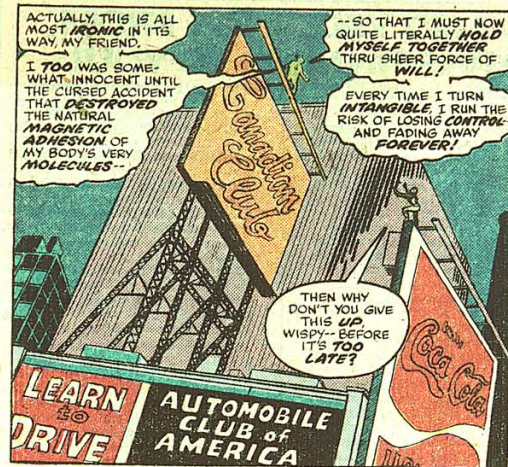
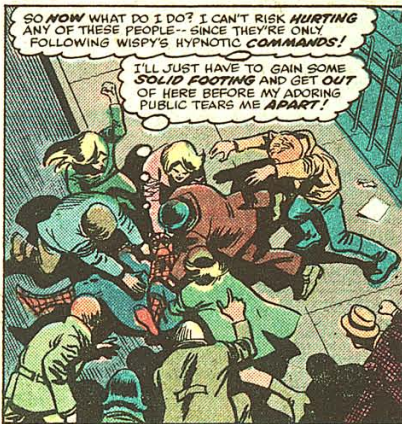
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STAN LEE'S SOAPBOX

Don'tcha hate people who return from a trip, grab your arm, and shout, "Hey! Let me tell you all about my trip!"? Well, now I know why they do it, because I feel like doing it, too. I just got back from a fast visit to England and Scotland on behalf of Marvel, and I'm bustin' to tell you all about it. As you probably know, we publish some weekly versions of our titles "way over there in our London office. As a matter of fact, in just a few short years, we've become the third largest comics producer in Britain. And until recently, they'd all been reprints of our own American strips, such as SPIDER-MAN, the F.F., HULK, etc. Well, a few months ago, we decided to try something really far-out. We wanted to do a special book just for our British buddies—a book that would feature their own exclusive super-heroes. The name we dreamed up was a natural: CAPTAIN BRITAIN! Anyway, to make a short story shorter, it was introduced early in October, and that's when I went overseas on a whirlwind promotion tour to talk up Cap Britain in particular and Mighty Marvel in general. I wish you could've been with me as I visited Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Newcastle, and London. Everywhere I went, I heard enthusiastic readers asking for more, more, more of our spunky little super-heroes! No kidding, if ever you get over to England, just introduce yourself to "most anyone as a practicin' Marvelite, and you'll probably get the keys to the

city! One of these days, we'll try to reprint some CAPTAIN BRITAIN yarns here in the USA, but till then you'll have to be satisfied with Howard the Duck wearing a bowler! By the way, no sooner did I return from my wife's halcyon homeland, than I had to hit the college lecture circuit again. In fact, as I sit penning these weighty and wondrous words, I've just returned from a cultural expedition to good ol' Northern Illinois University where I was Grand Marshal of their Homecoming Day Parade. (Jonah Jameson was too busy and they hadda get someone!) And I'm now about to pack for next week's trip to SUNY at Buffalo; University of New Mexico at Albuquerque; and Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa, California. Yep, like I always say, by the time I'm finished if Marvel Comics isn't required reading for every college curriculum, it won't be our fault! But now, it's time to pack some extra web fluid, uru paste, and throat spray; so I'll leave you with a fabulous little phrase I picked up in Newcastle—and, for once, I'll tell you what it means. (Hope I spell it right!) "Ceud mile faite!" It means "A hundred thousand welcomes!", and we'll award a giant-size no-prize to the first reader who can tell us how to pronounce it. Remember, it's Gaelic! But here's something everyone knows how to pronounce—

Excelsior!

Stan

ITEM! The leaves of Autumn may now be long fallen. The chill winds of Winter may now be briskly blowing. But for a few hours the other evening in Manhattan's Autopub restaurant, it was Summer again. Why? Because about two dozen bubbling Bullpeners gathered there over baked shrimp and sangria to celebrate the joys and sorrows, the highs and lows, of the 1976 softball season. And though Marvel's mean machine ultimately placed second rather than first in the Publisher's Softball League, you'd never have guessed it from the decibel level of the merrymaking at this first of what promises to be an annual banquet. Many toasts were made and each and every player was singled out for an appropriate award, such as the "longest, most grotesque head-first slide" award to Production Potentate LENNY GROW, the "only player to wear his baseball cap all year" award to Happy HERB TRIMPE, and the "cleanest T-shirt" award to Sturdy STU SCHWARTZBERG. The "Wonderful Person" award went to Mirthful MARIE SEVERIN. Probably there's absolutely no connection between her receiving this particular award and the fact that she's the one who made up all the award certificates. But if most of the presentations were something less than rock bottom serious, the last two of the evening were not, as dual trophies were given to the team's co-captains,

Impish IRENE VARTANOFF and Diamond JIM NOVAK, along with a standing ovation (at least from those not too weighted down with shrimp and sangria) and many cries of "Wait! It's next year!" It was a perfect capter to a sensational season and proof that the Bullpen can successfully collaborate on something other than comics. A special note of thanks should go to 'Nuff Said NELSON YOMTOV for arranging and stage-managing the whole banquet with the same style, expertise, and flair that he brought to playing third base (and this has been the only season where we could say that and still have it be a compliment!).

ITEM! If you're into perusing our monumental masthead (that little box of names and titles residing at the bottom of this page), then you've probably noticed a change or two. Like, for instance, where once Sparkling SCOTT EDELMAN's name was emblazoned as an Assistant Editor, now Energetic ED HANNIGAN is listed. After several years of superior service as a Marvel staffer, Scotty has opted for the free and easy freelancing life, and Ed, hitherto best known perhaps for his painstaking pencilling of KULL THE DESTROYER, was picked to fill the vacancy, having in the past revealed a flair for the ways of words and plotting as well as his very definite drawing ability. Naturally, we're not

about to let Mr. Edelman just slip off into oblivion. He'll continue as scripter for CAPTAIN MARVEL as well as some special short features that will be appearing in our awesome Annals. And we couldn't let Scott depart without revealing that he is the one who has handled the titanic task of coming up with a new alliterative headline for this column using a different letter of the alphabet each month (and if you think that's easy, check out what's available under X or Q sometime). In fact, the only way Editor ARCHIE GOODWIN would agree to unshackle the sparkling one from his desk was if he first finished headlines all the way through Z! So good luck, Scott, and thanks for everything... particularly increasing our word power!

ITEM! Another change on the masthead is the addition of STEVE "Baby" GERBER to our ranks of Consulting Editors. Beginning with issue #9 of HOWARD THE DUCK, Steve took on responsibility for editing the fighting fowl's adventures as well as writing them. Mr. G will also be writer/editor of one of the most unique and exciting Marvel projects since Spider-Man met a certain leaper over tall buildings in a single bound, namely a giant-size comic featuring the adventures of that wildest of all rock groups, KISS. This one has been in the talking stages for some time now—you may have heard rumors about it through fan channels—but now it's finally and officially underway. So, we'll be filling you in on all the devastating details just as fast as Steve finalizes and feeds them to us. Stick close, the wonderment's just getting started!

ITEM! As long as we're handing out hints on what's just over the horizon, we may as well tantalize you with the fact that we've just signed a contract to do a continuing series about one of the biggest movie stars of them all. Who? Well, we'll reveal that next month, but meantime, here's a little clue that ought to make guessing easy: He's green and mean, and leaves an imprint on the scene!

ITEM! With all the new projects in the works (and we haven't even started to unveil them for you), it's sad but inevitable that other titles would have to be discontinued to make room. Hence, over the last half year or so, we've had to cancel a few books. Whenever possible, we try to make certain that this falls at the end of a storyline. But often, there's just no way to end the series in time. Like those of you who write in to complain when this happens, we don't like it either. And we are trying to do something about it. Hence, though DEATHLOK has disappeared from our own series, you can see a tying of many plot threads in both MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #23 and in MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #27, where the bionic man-stalker meets bashful Ben Grimm. As the proper opportunities present themselves, we'll be attempting to wrap up many of the loose strands in Marvel's master design as we have with Deathlok. So, take heart, friends. We love all our caving characters—great and small—way too much to leave any of them hanging forever!

ARCHIE GOODWIN
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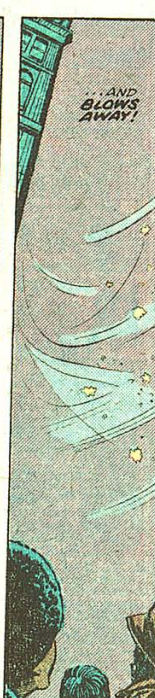


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